

GOOD NEWS ABOUT PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN UTAH

STUDENTS ACHIEVING

Reading Scores Are Up: The proportion of Utah public school 4th graders who scored at the highest two levels in reading in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) increased by 25% between 1998 and 2005.¹

Math Scores Are Up: The proportion of Utah public school 4th graders who scored at the highest two levels in mathematics in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) increased by 94% between 1992 and 2005.²

Math Scores Are Up: The proportion of Utah public school 8th graders who scored at the highest two levels in mathematics in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) increased by 36% between 1992 and 2005.³

More Public Schools Than Private Schools Offer AP: As of 2006, 85% of Utah's public high schools offer Advanced Placement (AP) courses through which high school students can earn college credit, while just 34% of Utah's private high schools offer these advanced courses.⁴

Public School Students Outperform Private Schools in Math and Science: In Utah, public school students score higher than private school students on their AP exams in calculus, chemistry, and physics.⁵

Among the Best in the Nation in Students Receiving a High Score on AP Calculus Exams: Utah is one of the top 15 states in the nation in the proportion of students (65.5%) who have received a score high enough to earn college credit on the Advanced Placement (AP) Calculus exam.⁶

Utah Has Third Highest Percentage of Graduating Seniors Passing AP Tests: Utah, at 20.8 percent, has the third highest percentage in the nation of graduating public school seniors scoring a 3 or higher on an AP exam in high school. This is up from 17.8 percent in the 2000 graduating class.⁷

HIGH QUALITY TEACHERS

Math Teacher Qualification in Middle and High Schools Are on the Rise: The proportion of 7th through 12th grade public school math teachers with majors in their field has increased by 15%, making Utah one of the top 3 most improved states in the nation.⁸

Middle and High School Science Teachers Are Among the Most Qualified in the Nation: Utah is one of the top 10 states in the nation in proportion of 7th through 12th grade public school science teachers with majors in their field.⁹

Science Teacher Qualification in Middle and High Schools Are on the Rise: The proportion of 7th through 12th grade public school science teachers with majors in their field has increased by 26%, making Utah one of the top 2 most improved states in the nation.¹⁰

One of the Best Graduation Rates in the Country: At 83.8 percent in 2004, Utah's public high school graduation rate is the best in the country.¹¹

YET CHALLENGES REMAIN

Elementary Schools Are Among the Nation's Largest: With an average of 515 students per school as of the 2003-2004 school year, Utah has the 13th largest average elementary school size in the nation.¹²

Public School Spending Is Worst in Nation: Utah ranks last in the nation in spending per student on public education.¹³

Class Sizes Are the Largest in the Nation: With an average of more than 25 students per class, Utah has the largest average elementary school class size in the nation.¹⁴

Schools Need Major Repairs: Utah school buildings need major improvements. Thirty-two percent (32%) of Utah schools have crumbling roofs. Thirty-three percent (33%) have bad plumbing. Thirty-four percent (34%) of Utah schools need a building extensively repaired or replaced. Seventy-two percent (72%) of all Utah schools are in unsatisfactory environmental condition, and 34% have poor ventilation. Twenty-seven percent (27%) of Utah schools lack adequate power outlets and wiring for classroom computers.¹⁵

¹ <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/pdf/stt2005/2006452UT4.pdf>

² <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/pdf/stt2005/2006454UT4.pdf>

³ <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/pdf/stt2005/2006454UT8.pdf>

⁴ http://www.collegeboard.com/prod_downloads/student/testing/ap/sumrpts/2006/xls/national_summary.xls

⁵ http://www.collegeboard.com/prod_downloads/student/testing/ap/sumrpts/2006/xls/UTAH_Summary.xls

⁶ http://www.collegeboard.com/prod_downloads/student/testing/ap/sumrpts/2006/xls/national_summary.xls

⁷ http://www.collegeboard.com/prod_downloads/about/news_info/ap/2007/2007_ap-report-nation.pdf

⁸ <http://www.ccsso.org/Publications/Download.cfm?Filename=SM03.pdf>

⁹ <http://www.ccsso.org/Publications/Download.cfm?Filename=SM03.pdf>

¹⁰ <http://www.ccsso.org/Publications/Download.cfm?Filename=SM03.pdf>

¹¹ Salt Lake Tribune, 06.13.07.

¹² Digest of Education Statistics 2005, http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d05/tables/dt05_096.asp

¹³ Joint Economic Committee, Utah Economic Snapshot, May 2007

¹⁴ http://www.schools.utah.gov/finance/statistics/demographic_reports/files/staff%20ratios%20FY06.xls

¹⁵ <http://www.asce.org/pressroom/publicpolicy/schools.cfm>